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PRESS RELEASE

USAID-sponsored Civil Society Media Awards recognize the top supporters of civil society in 2007

On January 30, 2008, the USAID Civil Society Strengthening Project joined the Macedonian Institute for Media (MIM) in presenting the winners of the 2007 Civil Society Media Awards. Television station Kanal 5 received the top overall award, with other winners including newspapers *Utrinski Vesnik* and *Monitor* for promoting civil society at the national and local levels, respectively, A1 television program *Rano Den* for the best electronic media program, and newspaper *Dnevnik* for the best print media.

The winners were selected through a voting process conducted between October and December 2007 among all non-governmental organizations (NGOs), citizens' associations and foundations registered in the Republic of Macedonia. The final decision was made by a seven-member jury, comprised of prominent NGO representatives and media researchers.

The USAID Civil Society Strengthening project is implemented by a consortium led by the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ICS) in partnership with MIM, the Center for Institutional Development and the European Center for Not-for-Profit Law. The project, which began in 2005, supports Macedonia's civil society to become more effective and influential in addressing the critical issues facing the country. This is the second non-monetary annual award conducted by the project. Last year, the top prize was awarded to A1 television station, with recognitions given to Sitel TV, *Utrinski Vesnik* and MRTV.

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The American people, through USAID, have invested nearly \$500 million in Macedonia since 1993. USAID is implementing projects that create jobs, reduce corruption, and prepare Macedonian students for the workforce. These initiatives improve the quality of life and support Macedonia's transition to a stable and prosperous democracy. USAID provides economic and humanitarian assistance in more than 100 countries. For more information please visit <http://macedonia.usaid.gov>.